CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Inadequate security arrangements at strategic and sensitive public places in Delhi

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharashtra): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the inadequate security arrangements at strategic and sensitive public places in Delhi and the steps taken by Government to fully protect the same.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I may kindly be permitted to make the statement on behalf of the Minister of Home Affairs, Shri Buta Singh. Sir, the existing security arangements at strategic and sensitive public places in Delhi are not inadequate.

As the strategic and sensitive public places have not been explained in the Calling Attention Motion, it is presumed that the term refers to vital installations, Centres of Broadcasting and other centres of Public activity like Airport, Railway Stations, Inter-State Bus Terminal, etc.

The primary responsibility of security of vital installations is of the concerned managing agency like the Municipal Corporation of Delhi in the case of Water Works, Delhi Electricity Supply Undertaking in the case of Power Stations, etc. Some of the more important vital installations have been picked up for the purpose of providing armed guards. At present 37 vital installations in Delhi have been provided armed guards.

The Delhi Railway Police is deployed round-the-clock at all railway stations to keep a watch on platforms, waiting rooms and passenger halls etc. An officer of the rank of Deputy Commissioner of Police is incharge of security arrangements at Indira Gandhi International Airport. Armed sentries are posted all around the perimeter of Indira Gandhi International Airport. Strict access control is exercised at all entry points. Armed Guards have been provided at All India Radio and Doordarshan and all transmitting stations in different parts of Delhi.

To supplement the resources of Delhi Police, the Central Government has placed 65 companies of C.R.P.F. and other Armed Police at the disposal of Delhi Administration to meet various law and order situations as well as for deployment for security purposes. Regular review of security arrangements for these strategic and sensitive public places is carried out by Delhi Police in consultation with intelligence agencies and other organisations.

The Delhi Police have taken the following steps to supplement security arrangements at strategic and sensitive public places:—

1. Intelligence machinery has been geared up with referenec to terrorist activities.

2. A separate Anti-Terrorist Cell under a DCP has been created in Delhi.

3. The number of Police Control Room (PCR) vans running round-the-clock has been increased from 44 to 165.

4. These PCR vans have been supplemented with motorcycle patrolling.

5. PCR vans and motorcycle patrolling are directed to specially cover strategic and sensitive public places. They pay special attention to busy shopping centres, banks, cinemas and vital installations falling in their beats.

[Shri P. Chidambaram]

6. Beats in various Police Stations have been earmarked and each beat is under a Beat Officer. These beats are extensively patrolled by the Beat Officers.

7. Periodical exercises are carried out to check the response time and reaction of PCR vans, motorcycles and other field staff.

8. Regular briefing of staff deployed on security duties at vital installations and other important places is carried out.

9. Coordination meetings with officials of neighbouring districts are held with a view to exchange information on terrorists and other dangerous criminals.

10. Periodical review of security arrangements is done in consultation with intelligence agencies and other organisations.

Within the available resources of the Delhi Police, action has been taken to provide adequate security over to as large a number of strategic and sensitive public places as is possible. In the final analysis security in public places can be enhanced only with the active cooperation of the public who have to be vigilant and forthcoming in extending their help to the Police.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, from the statement of the hon. Minister it appears that all is fine and O.K. with the security in Delhi and other places. Sir, Delhi is not a city which represents only the capital of India, free and democratic India. There is police seen everywhere but there is no protection when the situation so demands. The common man in Delhi today is feeling very insecure. We have lost many personalities. We have lost a tall leader like Mrs. Indira Gandhi to an assassin's bullet in Delhi. We have lost a colleague in Parliament, Shri Lalit Maken, and his wife Shrimati Gitanjali. We have lost a Councillor in Shri Arjun Das, and in a shooting of Mr. Manchanda lost his life. There are a host of other incidents. Specifically, there is a news, we have heard about the attempt to bomb the Indian Parliament. In spite of all this there is a lull and because of the lull there seems to be some amount of complacency on the part of the Government.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Madhya Pradesh): There is no lull Mr. Kalmadi. Today the terrorists have killed more than 15 persons who were coming in a bus from Muktsar to Delhi. This has happened this morning.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Six to seven extremists in Canada were rounded up on charges of wanting to plant a bomb in Indian Parliament. They had planned to kidnap the son of Member of Parliament to use him to place a bomb in Parliament House. Their telephonic conversation was tapped which gives evidence to the fact that it is not isolated in Canada alone, they have links in Netherlands and in India. Their alternative plan was to detonate a truck in Parliament House. The CBI here is supposed to have arrested 12 terrorists for planning to blast the Parliament House. And how has the Government reacted to all this, what steps have been taken by Government to guard the Parliament House and the capital city of this democratic country? There is totally inadequate protection in Parliament.

[Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

Police might be seen everywhere. But what are they guarding Parliament House with? With 303 rifles. Do you see any of them with sten-guns at the gate? Not even one. Yes, the Ministers might be having ten men with sten-guns. You don't have to kidnap a Member of Parliament's son at all. It is

not required. I think the terrorists are planning on a very high scale. You are thinking there is some element of security in the country. Let me tell you you don't have it. Any person can walk in here, shoot the guards at the gate and enter inside Parliament House. There is no security. You find the security guards chatting among themselves, chewing pan. Whose security are they guarding? The Prime Minister sits here. At his House, the security might be all right. But when he sits here in Parliament, I shudder to think that just two people with guns can walk in through the entrance to the Rajya Sabha, kidnap the Prime Minister and go back, and I tell you, you will be just watching. This is the sad plight.

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA (Delhi): What are you talking?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Mr. Gupta, you people always wake up when the incident takes place and it is over. This is a warning to you all because Government is being lethargic. You see the situation. Are you not being defended with 303 guns? Is any other Parliament in the world being defended with .303 guns? It is very surprising! Sir, I would like to know what specific steps are being taken by the Government in this regard.

Also there have been serious lapses of intelligence. You are aware of the transister bomb cases. People came from all over. At least a dozen people took part in the operations in Delhi. Lot of lives were lost. It was an organised work. But did the intelligence know what was happening? Have you learnt any lessons from all this? I firmly believe that these incidents of transistor bombs were a grand dress rehearsal for many things to come and I do not know whether the intelligence is aware of the same. We do not know what happened to the killers of Lalit Maken. We do not know what happened to the killers of Arjun Das. Has any of them been caught? Has any of them been traced? Time and again, Sir, the Government leaders have bewailed abject failure of intelligence and every time they have made a flurry of repetitive announcements that intelligence is being geared up, the security forces are being revamped etc. etc. And yet every time you find that the barn is locked only after the horse has bolted away. Once again the same syndrome is repeated, tears are shed over the sad state of intelligence, brave announcements are made of terrorists being put down with a heavy hand, about the State being alerted and so on. In the wake of every terrorist act, claims are made of a vital break through, some stray arrests are made and the moment the crisis blows ever, every thing returns back to normal. Even in the case of the Sikh Leader Manchanda who was shot dead in broad daylight in the busy street of the capital, the authorities announced that they have got some vital clues, of the Fiat car being parked somewhere, the investigations took the usual course and back into the limbo! This is the situation of Delhi Police. What is the Government doing about it?

What about the security at the airport. While I concede that after the security check is over, things are slightly better now. You have to identify your baggage outside. There has been some work there. But what about the ticketing area? What about the checking area? Anybody can walk into the airport. Where are the security guards there who are going round checking the luggage. I went to Russia 3 or 4 months back. I just left my luggage for one minute at the airport terminal and went for a cup of coffee. Within two minutes the Russian guards were there checking whose baggage was this. This is the state of alertness there. You see the alertness in Israeli Airlines also. You see their staff, how they work. This is what you should emulate. There was a bomb blast at

[Shri Suresh Kalmadi]

Meonakabam airport. The DGCA constituted a committee and all agencies concerned with airport security took the bomb threat in a most casual manner. This was the report of the Committee. They have suggested that Bomb Threat Committees be formed at all airports for effective implementation of the bomb threat drill. I would like to know if this report of the Committee has been implemented or it is just gathering dust somewhere.

Also, Sir, yesterday the Home Minister has reported of the intriguing nexus between the terrorists and a group of international drug smugglers. This is a very very dangerous development. People are selling drugs in the country and that money is being utilized to finance the terrorists. I would like to know what the Government is doing in this regard.

Sir, I now come to the police force in Delhi. Sir, you are aware that a posting to Delhi is a prized posting. Everybody who has contacts, those who can manage to come to Delhi come to Delhi and once they come to Delhi, they stay here. You just take the list of the Superintendents of Police or Deputy Superintendents of Police or anybody else in the police. You will find that they have been posted here in Delhi for 20 to 25 years. There is a lot of corruption and, I am very sorry to say, for them it is five-star culture. I think there should be a complete revamping of the police force in Delhi and the public should be made to feel secure here because today the public of Delhi do not at all feel secure. Though they see uniforms everywhere, when the time comes there is nobody to be seen. There must be a separate squad for normal duties and a separate squad for security duties. Also, I would suggest in this regard that police could be got from all the States: there must be a mixture of the police forces from all the States here. I do not know what steps the Government intends taking now, but something has to be done about providing efficient police force in the capital of the country.

Sir, the concept of security must be developed. What are the priority areas? A cross-check of the people manning the security must be done. We know what had happened in the case of Mrs. Gandhi. There is no proper training today, there is no motivation today. A complete review must be undertaken. The security guards just do not know what they are standing there for. Also, Sir, I think a stress test must be part of the administration's work. Sir, you are aware that in one of the Minister's houses a police guard shot himself. It was said it was a misfire. But I do not know if it was a stress-fire. So, things like that have to be gone into.

Sir, I have nothing more to add except that the Government must wake up from its deep slumber. Just bringing in ten thousand policemen into Delhi is not going to work. They have to be effective. They have to ensure that there is a crack squad. For that the Government itself must be serious, the Government must have time to look into all these. Definitely I want to charge that the Government is sleeping over the matter, they are going from one incident to another incident and there is no long-term plan. The police are an inefficient lot in Delhi. The people are feeling insecure today and that is why I thought I must bring in this motion to call the attention of the present Government.

Thank you.